

A black chain link icon positioned above the letter 'i' in the word 'Links'.

Links

A Communication Course with Extensive Reading

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Overview

The Links coursebook series accompanies the xreading digital library (xreading.com). Although it is used in conjunction with graded readers on xreading, it is not a reading textbook. Rather, it is a four skills book to be used alongside xreading, and will be bundled with a subscription to xreading. The three-level series provides thematically arranged units which are linked to specific books available for students to read on the site. The main focus of the course book is as follows.

1 An Extensive Reading Integrated Course.

Rather than extensive reading done entirely out of class as an independent activity, graded readers from the site are linked to activities in the course book. Students start by learning about a topic and related vocabulary. Then, they read a graded reader on xreading linked to the same theme, using some of the vocabulary they have just learned. Finally, they engage in various tasks directly building on what they read about.

2 Task-based language teaching (TBLT).

All content in the books is developed within a TBLT framework. Essentially, this means that tasks are designed to allow learners to use their existing language to complete them first, and then teachers can provide language support where necessary. This gives students chances to experience success, builds motivation, and allows the teacher or learner to use the extra language support available at the back of the book if required.

3 Reality-based fiction and non-fiction.

Each unit focusses on a central graded reader, which is an example of 'reality-based fiction' (i.e. a fictional story which is typically reality-based – many of the places, people, and situations are real). This allows each book to be tied to subsequent tasks that are related to the real world and deal with issues that will be of interest to high school and university students. Finally, learners read a non-fiction book on the same theme, providing them with factual information about the world around them and consolidating what they have learned in the unit. Themes include study abroad, technology, science, and history.

4 English as a lingua franca.

Listening activities in each unit are also designed with a TBLT approach in mind, providing examples of people successfully completing tasks. This presents an ideal model for subsequent tasks (or task repetition). These models are non-native speakers, providing a realistic, and attainable example, which again helps to motivate learners.





Unit Breakdown

Each unit follows the structure outlined below. It is important to note that we have designed the units with teacher flexibility in mind. The order within and between units can be changed, and whole units can be skipped or done out of order if preferred. We have designed each unit to take approximately four to five hours of classroom time, but by skipping or extending certain parts, this could easily become shorter or longer.

Pre-reading activities

This section is made up of various tasks and activities that learners complete before reading the main graded reader for the unit. The main parts are as follows.

1. Speaking

A simple conversation warm-up with questions based on the main unit theme. Learners are encouraged to ask follow-up questions and give extra information. If required, a more structured speaking task is provided at the back of the book.

2. Split reading

Short split readings on the theme of the unit provide learners with interesting input. They then try to remember the main points to tell their partner. These readings feature lower frequency vocabulary from the main graded reader, so learners will meet this language several times in a unit, providing repetition. Exercises at the back of the book also give learners the opportunity for deliberate focus on vocabulary if required.

3. Mini-task

A short speaking task on the theme of the split readings provides students the chance for interaction and language production. It is also serves as an introduction to the theme of the main graded reader that they will read.

4. Pre-reading questions

Some questions which allow a small warm-up prior to reading the main graded reader. Learners are also told at this point that they will need to read the main book for the unit before the next class.



Post-reading activities

This section follows on after students have read the main graded reader for the unit.

1. Comprehension check

Students work together to answer questions related to the content of the book that they read. This section also includes a writing task in which students produce a short summary of the book, or a prediction of what might happen to the characters afterwards. They then swap textbooks with a partner to compare their ideas. This is designed to help learners to remember what they read, and to prepare them to talk about it. If the teacher or learners want to extend this writing task, there is a space at the back of the coursebook for each unit to write a review of the main graded reader.

2. Speaking

A group task in which learners ask and answer questions related to details about the main graded reader, and some more open questions about the central theme of the book. This facilitates a scaffolded discussion of the main graded reader.

3. Listening

Learners listen to audio* of two non-native speaking peers discussing the main graded reader. This provides a model for some of the questions and answers in the previous section and an opportunity for task repetition if the teacher or learners deem it useful. This part also includes a short discussion task using a question prompt from the listening.

**The audio for this will be available through QR codes within the book which will allow both teachers and students to easily access it.*

4. Communication task

This is the main task of the unit, designed to tie in with the main reader, in which students complete a speaking task, which includes a pre-task and a post task. This gives students another chance to interact and discuss issues concerning the main theme of the unit.

Extended reading activities

This section continues the main topic of the unit, and provides more output activities (which teachers might like to make into larger projects for some units) such as presentations. Students also have an opportunity to discuss the second book that they have read for the unit.

1. Pre-reading questions

Learners discuss questions relating to a follow-up book that they will read next. At this point, learners are given a choice of three books that they can choose from. The books are related to the unit theme.

2. Writing

As with the previous section, this is a short summary writing task. Learners then compare their writing with their partner's.

Discussion

Learners may have read different books, but the questions in this part are designed to work regardless of which one they've read. This means that learners can talk about the books they have read and find similarities and differences between them.

3. Presentation

This part provides cues for learners to design a presentation on a topic related to the main unit theme. It could be done within the one class as a short and simple group presentation, or teachers may wish to extend this to become a large-scale presentation in the next class.

4. Review

The final part provides some simple review questions about the entire unit as a way of reflecting on what has been learned.

Table of Contents

Title	Reading	Main Speaking Task	Main graded reader	Follow-up graded readers
Preview Introducing extensive reading	Why extensive reading?	Finding out about classmates' reading habits	Seven Days	N/A
Unit 1 Friendship	How do we make friends?	Describing different types of friends	Egghead	10 ways to make friends 10 ways to do small talk 10 ways to communicate
Unit 2 Technology	Using smartphones	Making rules to reduce smartphone use	Breaking Free	Galileo Galilei Leonardo da Vinci Benjamin Franklin
Unit 3 Study Abroad	Popular study abroad destinations and airports	Choosing the perfect homestay family	Homestay in Auckland	Homestay in the USA Homestay in the UK Homestay in Australia
Unit 4 Peace	Are humans becoming more peaceful?	Giving advice to solve conflicts	100 Days at Sea	Poundmaker Big Bear Wangari Maathai
Unit 5 Money	The gap between the rich and the poor	Deciding how the government should spend money	Robin Hood	The future of a village The black diamonds of Provence Peruvian weavers
Unit 6 Science and progress	Research in Antarctica	Choosing the most important invention	Ice Station at the End of the World	Nanotechnology research scientists How's the weather? App developers
Unit 7 History	The history of two empires	Visiting a time in history	The Time Shrine	The Neo-Assyrian Empire The Neo-Babylonian Empire The Ottomans and their Empire
Unit 8 Stories	Folk tales from around the world	Creating your own fairytale	Folktales	The elephant's child The nutcracker Thumbelina
Review Talk about your experiences with extensive reading				

3 Study abroad

A great way to expand your world

In this unit, you will read 'A homestay in Auckland' and other books about studying abroad.



Pre-reading activities

Speaking

1 Work with a partner. Answer the following questions.

- Have you ever studied abroad?
- Would you like to study abroad in the future?
- Which countries are popular for studying abroad?
- What is a good reason for foreign students to study abroad in your country?



2 Remember to **give more information** when you answer and to **ask questions** to your partner.



Rie: Have you ever studied abroad?

Kumi: No, but I really want to go somewhere next year.

Rie: I've never been either, but I'd love to go. Where would be a good place do you think?

Kumi: Maybe New Zealand. My mother went there when she was a student, and she really loved it. Are you thinking about going somewhere?

Rie: Possibly. It depends on how much money I can save this year.

Split reading

- 1 The articles below are about traveling to another country to study. First, read the introduction.

Popular places

If you go on a study abroad trip, the first thing you will probably do is decide which country to visit. Then, when you finally leave on your trip, the first place you will go is the airport. Below, you will read about popular study abroad destinations and popular airports.

- 2 Student A, read the article about study abroad countries. Student B, read the article about airports. Then, close your book, and summarize the article to your partner. Finally, read the other article. Did your partner include all the main points? Give them a rating and tell them if they missed anything.

A

Popular study abroad countries



If you could study abroad in another country where would you go? There are nearly 200 countries in the world, so

there are a lot of options. The United States is the country which has the most foreign students studying there, but it might not be the most popular. In a recent survey, Canada was chosen as the most popular study abroad **destination**. This might not be too surprising because it is famous for having many great **sightseeing** spots, like Lake Louise, in Banff. Canada is also well-known for the people living there. The **local** people are really friendly, which is important. In the same survey, Australia and Germany were also very popular. Australia is a very large country with some interesting animals, such as koalas and kangaroos. There are also many beaches where you can see beautiful **scenery**. Surfing is popular too, although you do have to be careful of sharks sometimes. Germany is a great place for many people because it's possible to study both English and German at the same time! It also has good **transport**, so it's easy to get around and the food is great too.

B

Popular international airports

Have you ever taken a **flight** to another country? If so, you must have been to an international airport. There are over 17,000 international airports in the world, and many of them are similar. They all have an **immigration** section, where you must show your passport. They usually also have a **customs** area, where you sometimes have to explain what is in your bags. However, some airports have other unique features, which makes them very popular. Each year, customer surveys show which airports are popular. Although it changes every year, three airports are often very high on the list. Changi Airport in Singapore is famous for being one of them. It is extremely large, with over 60 shops, so you can buy clothes, food, or **souvenirs**. There is also a hotel and a swimming pool inside the airport, and it even has its own butterfly garden! It's also has some of the best **bathrooms** in the world. In the top three you can also usually find Hamad Airport in Doha, and Haneda Airport in Tokyo. As well as being popular, all are very busy airports, with millions of visitors each year.



I give my partner _____ points out of five. My reason(s): _____

Mini-task

- 1 What are some advantages and disadvantages of studying abroad? Add your ideas to the table.

Advantages	Disadvantages

- 2 Work with your partner. Compare your ideas. Do you agree or disagree with them?

Pre-reading questions

You are going to read the book 'A Homestay in Auckland' on xreading.com. Before you read it, discuss the following questions with your partner.

- Can you name any cities in New Zealand?
- What is your image of New Zealand?
- What animals is New Zealand famous for?
- Do you know anything else about New Zealand?
- What do you think the book will be about?



Now read the book before the next class.

Comprehension check

1 Work with a partner. Answer the following questions about 'A Homestay in Auckland'.

Questions about details

- How long did it take for Erina to fly to New Zealand?
- Who were the members of Erina's host family?
- What problem did Min-ji have with her host family?
- Where did Erina go sightseeing?
- What happened when Erina got lost on her way home?
- What foods did Erina eat in New Zealand?



2 Write a short summary of the book 'A Homestay in Auckland'.

3 Swap textbooks with your partner. Read their summary. Is it similar to yours? What things did they write that you didn't?

Speaking

1 Make a group. Answer the following questions related to 'A Homestay in Auckland'.

Your ideas...

If you went to the Williams house for a homestay, what gift would you take from your country?

Erina made Japanese yakisoba for her host family. If you went to the Williams house, what food would you make?

Erina likes everything that she eats. Is there anything that you can't eat?

Was the book easy to understand?

Would you recommend the book to other people?

2 Now, tell your answers to the class.

Listening

Track 4



- 1** Listen to Raj and Tina talk about the book that they read. While listening, answer the following questions.

What did Raj like about the book?

What did Tina dislike about it?



- 2** Listen to the conversation again. Complete the following sentences.

Raj: "I thought the part about _____ was really good."

Tina: "When Erina made a mistake with the bus stop, I thought _____."

Raj: "If I was staying with that family, I would make _____ for them."

Tina: "I think I'd probably recommend this book to other people because _____."

Communication task

- 1** Work with your partner. Answer the following questions.

- If you studied abroad, would you prefer to stay in a dormitory or with a homestay family?
- If you stayed with a homestay family, what would your ideal host family be like?

- 2** Imagine that you are going to do a study abroad trip to New Zealand for one month. You will live with a host family. Look at the four host families on the next page. Decide which family you would choose and why.

• HOMESTAY FAMILIES •

The Weber Family

Max Weber: 51 years old; engineer; likes to read and learn about new technology

Sofia Weber: 40 years old; designer; loves learning new languages

.....
Max and Sofia moved to NZ from Germany a few years ago. They have two children, Lina (16) and Mila (14). They live near the sea an hour from Auckland and often travel to other parts of the country.



The Wilson Family

Jane Wilson: 39 years old; university researcher; likes to write books and travel

.....
Jane is a single mother of one girl, Alana who is 7 years old. Jane lives on a small farm outside Auckland, and they have many farm animals including lambs, chickens, a horse, and two dogs, Spike and Johnny.



The Ralston Family

Mike Ralston: 30 years old; lawyer; loves the outdoors, kayaking, and fishing

Naomi Ralston: 27 years old; kindergarten teacher; likes to play netball

.....
They have one son, Tyler (5).

They live in a large house near Auckland and often go to the local park on weekends.



The Smith Family

Tom Smith: 70 years old; retired doctor; enjoys playing chess and going for walks

Edith Smith: 68 years old; works part-time in the office of a school; enjoys learning about other countries and cultures

.....
Tom and Edith are both retired, and live in a house in the suburbs of Auckland with a big garden. They also have a holiday home near a lake in the country.



- 3 Make a group and discuss your ideas. Which families were most popular, and why? Finally, choose someone in your group to tell the class about your ideas.
- 4 Imagine you are going to stay with the family you chose. Write them a short note to introduce yourself and ask them some questions.

X-tended reading activities

Pre-reading questions

You read a story about studying abroad in New Zealand. Next, you are going to choose a book about study abroad in a different country.



1 Work with your partner. Discuss the following questions.

1. What are some famous places and foods in the following three countries?

The USA

The UK

Australia

2. What else do you know about these countries?

2 Choose one of these books to read on xreading.com.

Homestay in the USA

Homestay in the UK

Homestay in Australia

Now read the book before the next class.

Writing

1 In the space below, write a short summary of the book that you read.

2 Work with a partner. Read what they wrote. Was it similar to your summary?

Discussion

1 Make a group. Together, answer the following questions about the books you read.

- Can you remember the names of some of the main characters?
- How long was the study abroad trip?
- Which places did they visit?
- What kind of food did they eat?
- Did they have any problems during their trip?
- Do you think they enjoyed the trip?
- Would you like to go to the place they went? Why or why not?
- Would you recommend this book to other people?

2 Choose one member to summarize to the class what you talked about.

Presentation

You are going to give a short presentation about a study abroad destination. First, choose a country and then find out about the following things.

- What is some background information about the country?
- How long does it take to get there from your country?
- Is there a time difference?
- What are some things you should know before you go?
- What are some differences and similarities between that country and your country?
- Why do you think it would be a good place to study abroad?



Review



1 The topic of this unit was 'Study Abroad'. Let's review the unit. Answer the following questions.

1. What were two things you learned in this unit?

2. What were three vocabulary words you remember from the readings?

2 Work with your partner. Compare your ideas from 'Part 1'.

Extra information/Follow-up questions

Complete the boxes with extra information and follow-up questions.



Would you like to study abroad in the future?



Vocabulary

- 1 Look at the words in bold in the articles on page 27. What do they mean? Use a dictionary for words that you don't know. Write them in the Vocabulary Notebook below.

	UNIT 3 Vocabulary Notebook
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- 2 Work with your partner. Take turns to say one of the words in bold. Your partner should make a sentence with that word. Finally, write two example sentences. Get ready to tell the class.

1.	
2.	

3 Cover the previous page. Use the hints to complete the following sentences with words from the split readings on page 27. After you finish, compare your answers with a partner.

1. She stopped in Singapore on the way to her final d_____.
(a place someone is going)
2. In American English, b_____ can also refer to the toilet.
(a room that has a bath or toilet in it).
3. When you arrive at an airport, you have to go through c_____ where they might ask you some questions about what is in your bags. (a part of an airport)
4. Could you tell me some interesting places in your l_____ area?
(located nearby)
5. When I was in Barcelona I did a lot of s_____, but the best thing was Sagrada Familia. (looking at famous places)
6. At the i_____ desk in an airport, the staff will ask you to show your passport.
(a place that you have to go to in an airport when leaving or arriving in a new country)
7. The s_____ in many parts of Canada is simply amazing. (a view that is very beautiful)
8. There are many t_____ options for getting around Osaka, including train, subway, bus, and taxi. (a system for moving people or goods)
9. Macadamia chocolates are a very popular s_____ to buy in Hawaii.
(something you buy for yourself or for others when visiting a new place)
10. The longest plane f_____ in the world is over 18 hours! (a plane trip)

Book review

Rating ☆☆☆☆☆ Difficulty ☆☆☆☆☆

Make a group. Read your reviews to each other. Did you agree about the book?

Links

A Communication Course with Extensive Reading

The only four skills communication textbook with an extensive reading component

- A winning combination of interesting topics, engaging language learning activities, and comprehensible input.
- Uses a task-based approach for developing greater student motivation.
- Thematic units with a variety of pre- and post-task activities built around a graded reader.
- Extended reading: additional graded readers and follow-up activities for each unit.
- Realistic dialogues of learners discussing various aspects of the books.
- Clear, easy-to-teach units that provide flexibility for various contexts.
- Includes a subscription to the full Xreading library with thousands of graded readers that students can read anywhere, anytime.
- More levels coming soon.



**XREADING is the best way
to do Extensive Reading!**



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